

# A Real Christmas

By Dorothy Boys Kilian

"THIS HOUSEHOLD is in for a lean Christmas, all right," Bill Robinson said bitterly to his wife who had just come into the living room, dressed for marketing, seated in an easy chair, he looked disgustedly down at his still-bandaged leg stretched out straight on an ottoman.

Margaret leaned over and pushed her cheek against his. "It's enough for us to see you getting well again, honey. When I first saw you after that auto accident, I was plumb scared for your life."

Bill squeezed her hand. "You're a brick, dear. But we can't expect our three and five-year-old offspring to understand that doctor and hospital bills have completely strapped us. Why we can't even afford a tree. Let alone presents."

Margaret was quiet for a second. Then she stood up and, turning toward the door, said: "Speaking of the children, Bill, they're out in the kitchen with their water colors."



"What a swell bunch of fellows," he managed to say.

and the two little Johnson girls are with them. Mrs. Johnson had some last minute shopping to do, and I knew you wouldn't mind watching them again."

"O.K.," Bill answered. "That's the least I can do after the neighborly way they treated us through all this mess."

"I'll try to be home before your Cub Scout group descends upon you. Seven lively boys are a terrific handful, I know."

VOICES FROM the kitchen broke into the silence. Judy Johnson was saying excitedly, "I think I'm going to get a doll buggy."

Back came his own little Margie's

answer. "I'm going to get a doll house."

"How do you know?"

"Oh, because I asked for one for my birthday last summer, and Daddy smiled and said probably one would come at Christmas."

Bill winced. It had been so easy, promising things for six months ahead.

Just then he heard Mrs. Johnson's hearty voice at the kitchen door. "Where's Mr. Robinson? I have something here for him."

"Oh, a Christmas tree!" The shrill voice of a child exclaimed. MRS. JOHNSON was laughing as she appeared at the living room door. "Did you hear Bill? Yes, I went shopping for our tree, and picked one up for you folks at the same time. It isn't so very tall though."

Mrs. Johnson went on talking, to cover Bill's embarrassment. "I'll take all the youngsters over to my house for awhile. And she was gone."

"Some neighbor!" Bill glowed. "Still," his face clouded over. "That tree may only point up the lack of much under it."

A loud commotion at the front door drew his attention. "Come on in, the door's not locked," he called, recognizing the voices of his cub Scouts.

A whirlwind of blue-clad boys swept into the room, their eyes sparkling with happy mischief.

"Oh, Mr. Robinson," the smallest one shrieked. "We've just finished all the—"

"We've been working after school every day at my house, making toys for you children," a second Cub burst in. "You should see a doll house for Margie, and a doll bed and a kitchen cupboard!"

"And for little Bill, guess what?" The smallest boy couldn't keep quiet. "A wooden sled, and garage for his little cars and some big blocks, all sanded and waxed and everything!"

Bill tossed his head to get rid of the drops of mist in the corners of his eyes. "What a swell bunch of fellows," he managed to say. "But why—"

"Why not?" the biggest Cub said happily. "You're the one who taught us how to use the tools in the first place, aren't you? And besides, we just like the Robinsons!" He stopped suddenly, embarrassed.

"Well, fellows," Bill said, after a deep breath. "I certainly didn't think so a while ago, but this is going to be one of the happiest Christmases of my life."

# Perfect Present

By Willard Olvan Persing

The reassuring weight of the nickels and dimes in his pocket took the bite out of the raw Saturday afternoon. Surveying the street from the eminence of three dollars for the first time in his eleven years Jimmy Sands thought it was a pretty nice world after all.

After enjoying this sense of prosperity for a few seconds, he remembered that he'd have to hurry if he wanted to hide the Christmas present before his mother woke up from her nap. A frown came over his face as he glanced around to locate his pup, Mike, anywhere in sight.

He started to whistle, but his attention was caught by little Sammy Farr, big-eyed with excitement and fright, running toward him.

"Hey, Jimmy!" called Sammy. "They took Mike!"

Jimmy's heart sank. He knew who 'they' meant, but he had to make sure. "Who took him?"

"The dogcatcher. Mike tried to run away, but they caught him down at the corner."

Little Sammy wiped his nose on a ragged cuff. "I didn't have time to hide him like we always did be-



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fore when that old dogcatcher came around.

"I shouldn't have left him down here by himself, but I didn't want to wake Mom up." Jimmy sat down on the step and buried his face in his hands. Sure, he thought, they'll keep Mike five days before they get rid of him, but a license will cost two dollars and a half.

Then he straightened up; he had three dollars in his pocket, three dollars all his own, that he had earned by running errands, selling junk, and saving the few pennies that his mother had given him for candy.

If he bought a license for Mike, he wouldn't be able to buy the new purse for his mother, but he could buy a nice handkerchief or something with the fifty cents that he would have left.

A boy of eleven couldn't cry in front of a seven-year-old so Jimmy blinked away the tears that came when he thought of fuzzy, playful Mike being tossed into a pen full of big snarling dogs.

"I wonder if they'll feed him food?"

A sense of shame kept returning when Jimmy thought of his mother's shabby old purse. She'd had it as long as he could remember, and he had seen her stop several times to admire the shiny black one with the gold-colored clasp that was in

Holtberg's window. He had been looking forward to Christmas morning when she could carry the new one proudly to church instead of hiding the old one's shabbiness by tucking it under her arm. It just wouldn't be right to spend that money for Mike's license.

"Come on, Sammy, if you'll keep it a secret, I'll let you go with me to buy Mom's present." Maybe he could leave the purse with the landlady until after his mother had gone to work. Jimmy was glad that she wouldn't have to clean up those offices on Christmas Eve and Christmas night.

Jimmy's mother smiled at him over the potatoe. She was peeling for the supper. "Didn't you come up from the front way?"

"Yes," Jimmy closed the door and walked over to stare out the one window in their room.

"You didn't leave Mike out in front?"

"No—" The tears that he had been holding back poured out. "The dogcatcher took him away." Jimmy sank into a chair by the table and buried his head in his arms.

Smiling to herself, Jimmy's mother placed a comforting hand on his shoulder and said, "I think it will be all right with Santa if you get your present tonight instead of tomorrow night." She took an envelope out of the shabby purse that lay on the table. "Merry Christmas, Jimmy."

Something in her voice made Jimmy open the envelope and look inside. "Mike's license!" Jimmy grabbed his cap and started for the door.

"You had better wait till tomorrow, Jimmy. It's late, and it's a long way over to the dog pound. They'll take good care of Mike."



"THE SAVIOUR FROM GLORY"

God's only Son came down from the glory,  
Coming to the world as The Saviour of men;  
Angels from glory Sang the Sweet Story,  
Telling of His love the loveliest again.

They Crucified our blessed Redeemer,  
Nailed His hands and His feet to the tree;  
Dear Lamb of God who suffered to Save us,  
Shed His Precious blood the Redeemer to be.

He conquered death, arose all victorious,  
Blessed Son of God who had carried our pain;  
And we shall see Him crowned in His glory,  
When our risen King shall return once again.

Chorus: Have you accepted this Saviour from glory?  
He gave His life that you might be free;  
Will you reject this wonderful glory?  
Of Christ the Lord, the Saviour is He.

—May Eaton Pasadena 5 Calif.

# ONE TRACK MIND

By Shirley Sargent

The very nicest thing about Henry Ellis, Henry had decided, was the fact that he was nine years old. He possessed another attribute variously described by his mother as stubbornness, stupidity, and the result of a one track mind. To get something he really wanted, Henry had learned from experience, he always had to work hard and long. Pestering his mother for what he wanted came easiest.

"Why not, mom?" he begged. "Why can't I do it? I want more than anything in the world, to be so good you wouldn't know me."

Finally his mother gave in to his endless teasing and what she considered impossible promises.

"All right, all right," she said.



Soundly sleeping, he lay back in the chair, in one hand a noise-maker, clutched limply in the other, a large horn. The box in his lap contained piles of confetti.

"We'll see if you can be good for a whole month and then—we'll see."

His long-awaited goal was in sight, but Henry had to admire his mother's shrewdness. Knowing that Rita, who was five, would keep close tab on him, Mrs. Ellis put her in Henry's charge for the month. Playing nursemaid to a five-year-old was a stern task, even when he could be as nasty as he wanted—but taking care of her on his good behavior was purely awful. All this time she would taunt her demands with "Or I'll tell mama."

Only once he told her calmly and desperately. "If I ever have any children, they'll all be boys or all be girls. I'm not going to make any little boy of mine have a little sister. No sir, I'll give him a turtle or goat or something he wants, not a little sister."

Rita just barely listened to him before demanding, "Now be a turtle for me, Henry. Crawl like a turtle and pull your head in a shell." So Henry crawled all over the apartment like a turtle and wished he'd kept quiet—like a turtle.

The days crept past. Christmas. Then at last the month was over and he heard his mother asking, "Had enough of being good Henry?"

Feeling it to be a trick question, he answered casually that...

# Christmas Miracle

By Maud McCurdy Welch

Patti was trying to forget it was Christmas. Last Christmas there had been Jimmy and a ring on her finger. Then there was a girl named Ann and everything was over. Patti had packed up and come to this part of the city to live.

So there were no holly wreaths or Christmas trees in Patti's Pie and Bake Shop just off one of the bustling avenues. There was only Patti with her brown curls and melow brown eyes and the long rows of pies and cakes in the show-cases.

People came from all over to buy Patti's cakes and pies and drink her coffee. There was the little old lady who sold magazines on the corner, who came in every day.

She was the first to come in on Christmas Day, and she was luging a big wreath of holly and mistletoe. "Hang it in the window, dearie," she said.

Patti looked at the wreath and a sick pain caught at her heart.

Then there was the telephone operator who worked in a branch exchange, and later the little boy who always stopped by from school. He had such sad blue eyes it made



When he saw the wreath his eyes brightened. "Gee, that's pretty."

would be fun to see the fellow again, and just sort of all over her. There were some very important matters to attend to before he was quite ready. They wouldn't take so long, but the waiting would. He started unwrapping his packages. Thanks to mom, life was really fine.

A little before 12 that night Mrs. Ellis, noting the silence went into Henry's room. His lights were blazing but the boy was asleep in a chair drawn close to an open window. She walked quietly over beside him. A whole month—thirty arduous days devoted to being good—he had worked for this night and now he was asleep with the sum total of his dreams in his lap and fists. Soundly sleeping, he lay back in the chair. In one hand a noise-maker, clutched limply in the other a large horn. The box in his lap contained piles of confetti, while reams of paper streamers were laid neatly over the chair arms. There was a ridiculous paper hat crushed into the chair back by his head, and, on the table near him, there was another horn. It had a white card tied on it labelled simply "For mother."

So, she thought, with tears in her eyes, a little man's plan for one night had included his mother. She shook him gently, settled his hat more perkily on his head, and picked up her own horn. Noise seemed suspended in the air.

"Wake up, little one track mind," she said, sitting him up straight. "Hurry and wake up so you can wish me a Happy New Year!"

# THE "MILLY-BOX"

Carolling Yorkshire children still carry a "milly-box", lined with sugar and oranges and containing two small figures. This custom dates back to ancient times when figures of Our Lady and the Holy Child were carried in procession by carol-singers in the Northern Counties of England. The word "milly" is a corruption of My Lady. In some parts of Yorkshire the box is called a "bessel cup" and the children "go a-wassailing".

Patti's heart ached. Patti always gave him a huge slice of pie and ate it with relish, but the sad bewilderment of his eyes never seemed to go away.

When he saw the wreath, his eyes brightened. "Gee, that's pretty. You goin' to have a Christmas tree too, Miss Patti?"

Patti started to say no, but choked. Instead she asked, "Don't you have a Christmas tree, Tommy?"

He shook his head. Patti said, her voice still choky, "Then we'll have one here. You can help me trim it."

In no time at all the tree was up and they were trimming it. In spite of her stern efforts, Patti was conscious of a slow excitement. Tommy asked if she believed in that Kris Kringle stuff, and she had to stop to think before answering. At last she said, "Yes, Tommy, I think I do. Kris Kringle may be just a symbol, but he's really alive in the hearts and spirits of hundreds of people all over the world."

Tommy's blue eyes grew bright. "Then do you think if I told him I only wanted my daddy back, and nothing else, he would bring him back to us? My mommy told him to go, but she didn't mean it. Now she's sick, but if Daddy would

# The Crib Replaced

May winds blow softly Christmas Day  
And overhead a cloudless sky,  
Where the living Church with open doors  
The silent bells peal forth the call;  
Within its Holy portals ring  
The songs of peace and joy they sing.

The humble manger is replaced  
By gothic splendor at its best,  
The towering spires lend a charm  
They stand as pillars of the faith;  
The old old story lives to tell  
The anxious world that all is well.

Peace, now a famine in this world,  
While guns and swords its calm  
Have crushed;  
But sadder still the lives of youth  
The hope of man's existence;  
When Heaven opens to its task  
The face of war will lose its mask.

Heaven's work well done, is strong-  
ly safe,  
To hold the power of earth in check;  
It cannot race beyond the creeds  
Nor shelve the lines of Holy Writ  
The words of hope come from above  
Where all is peace and joy and love.

—D. A. Louise Birch,  
Dorchester, Mass.

come back, we'd both be happy and she'd be well."

An idea was slowly dawning in Patti's mind. "We'll see what we can do, Tommy," she promised.

Patti hurried like mad and got a personal ad. In the late edition of one of the big dailies, it read:

"Mr. Thomas Baker, please call at Patti's Pie & Bake Shop at once."

Patti waited and waited. The little shop was brightly lit and the Christmas tree was a beautiful sight to see.

But no one came. Everything had been sold, so Patti was putting out the lights when a tall young man

walked in. He said, "I may be the Thomas Baker you're looking for. Of course I don't know."

Patti just felt it in her bones that he was the right one. She said, "Do you have a wife by the name of Margaret and a little boy named Tommy?"

"Yes, yes, I do."

"Then you're the right Thomas Baker. They want you to come home."

"Are you sure Margaret wants me too?" The young man's eyes were suddenly full of hope.

Patti nodded. "I'm very sure," and the young man thanked her, turn-

ed to go and almost collided with another tall young man who had just come in. He was looking at Patti with his whole heart in his eyes. "The minute I saw that personal ad, I was sure it was you. No one ever spelled Patti with an 'i' as you do." Then he reached for her hands. "Patti, won't you forgive me for thinking I could ever love another girl? Won't you let me put this ring where it belongs?"

Patti was choked up with happiness as he slipped the ring on her finger. "Finding you is like a Christmas miracle," he whispered as he took her in his arms.



# Greetings

The Management and Staff  
of  
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and  
Maritime Central Aircraft Maintenance  
wish their many friends and patrons  
a Joyous Christmas Season  
and a  
Bright New Year

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# Season's Greetings

It adds much to the enjoyment of the season  
to extend to our friends and customers  
our best wishes for a MERRY CHRISTMAS...

**Bruce Stewart & Company Ltd.**  
6 Great George Street Phone 62