

FAIRING

The little gifts, just now and then that come from friends—they are so dear. To human hearts! There is a glow that keeps them shining as they go. And each one lends Some sparkling bit of wonderment To life—the gifts that come from friends. The very little gifts that come from friends are always beautiful. On feet and radiant wings From far-flung journeyings They come to life The clouds or shadows of a day. God bless each very little gift. —Beatrice McElmond

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BIRMINGHAM TODAY - FRI. - SAT. SHIRLEY TEMPLE in "HEIDI" PLUS BETTE DAVIS HENRY FONDA in "That Certain Woman" SUN - MON - TUES - WED. SPENCER TRACY "LUISE RAINER" in "BIG CITY" PLUS LEW AYRES MARY CARLISLE in "Hold 'Em Navy"

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TWO IN ONE

By Marjorie Elaine Pester Surely, we can all remember our heroic efforts as youngsters to behave just before Christmas! Round-eyed and awe-stricken we listened to the terrifying "truth" or what our parents passed off rather glibly as such, concerning the righteous wrath of Santa Claus.

"Santa Claus can hear everything you say that is naughty," we were told, "and if you don't behave, he will write your name down in a big, black book, with all the other naughty children. If your name is in that book, you won't get anything for Christmas."

A pall of terror seemed to fall upon our youthful souls. Of course, we behaved. Who wouldn't? Temptation was strong at times, but there was always the consoling thought, "After Christmas was over, and snooty old Santa went back to the North Pole to tend to his knitting, we could be just as villainous as we dared."

When such threats as "Santa will hear you if you cry," "I'll tell Santa Claus you're naughty and not to bring you any toys, if you don't behave," "Come, do as I say or Santa will put switches in your stockings on Christmas morning," failed to produce virtuous results, there was another way.

This was the gentle art of bribery. Parents more tender-hearted often resorted to this method. Who of us can't remember a nauseating dose of oil floating on orange juice, and her mother's conciliatory voice: "Now if you take this castor oil, Willyum, I'll tell Santa Claus to bring you the biggest box of blocks he can find." Or "Leave the mustard plaster on your chest 10 minutes longer, Josie dear, and Mother will tell Old Santa to bring you a great, big dollie."

The good old days! We hope parents who so cheerfully and insistently lied to their children about bribes and bribes and bribes over their heads have gone out of fashion like bustles and side-whiskers.

Parents today understand that one can afford to be honest with his children. They have been told through various parent-education groups and courses, the evils of the "threat and bribe" system of training children.

They know there is a distinction between bribery and reward. A bribe, as parents today look upon it, is an attractive prize offered as an inducement to behave in a given way or to produce certain results. A reward, they know, comes as the result of action. It may be a favor or prize granted in recognition of good work done, or it may be mere parental pride in a child's completion of a worthwhile task.

So today, we may promise a reward in the form of a much-desired gift for Christmas. Or we may legitimately point out to our offspring that failure to reach a certain goal or complete a given task is undeserving of the gifts they most desire for Christmas. When parents make it clear that the child has it within his own power to win or lose the gift he hopes most to receive, it is a definite step toward character and behavior building.

By Carol Dweley Before I woke up this morning I was interviewing Santa Claus! Yes, sir, the famous old gentleman was no farther away from me than you are from this page. We faced one another across his big, cluttered desk, while he graciously took time from his Herculean labors, to answer my questions as fast as they were fired at him.

"Just how shall I identify you, sir?" I ventured timidly. "Of course the children don't need any credentials, but when they grow up, sometimes . . ."

He laughed, indulgently. "Why bless you, child, you needn't be embarrassed about it. I remember when you used to write to me yourself. You were a dear child—all children are dear. And I'm not saying that just because they believe in me either."

A dreamy look drifted over his rosy features. "But you're right, and so are the grown-ups you mention. And I can see you have a problem in trying to pigeon-hole a disreputable being like me. Well, tell me this. Tell 'em you can't put a finger on Santa Claus any more than you can on Love, or murrum, "Or Hate or Envy." Then he raised himself, and declared, challengingly:

"But I'm there all right. If my spirit didn't walk abroad on these cold December nights, why would people forget the petty hates in a glow of good feeling? Why would the kids go without candy so their little allowances could be spent on something for Mother and Daddy? Why would parents forget things they needed to buy dolls and trains and building blocks? Of course I'm there."

I nodded, and inquired, "Is that what they mean when they say that all of these organizations 'play Santa Claus' to the kids? He looked embarrassed, and fiddled with a snow-white strand of his silky beard. "Pshaw, child, you haven't gotten the point. And I'm not much of a public speaker, either. But we'll try again, so pay close attention."

"These groups: service clubs, Goodfellows, Old Newsboys, the churches, Salvation Army—Lord love you," he broke off, happily. "It does my heart good not to be able to count 'em all even when I use my fingers. Well all these good men and women, yes, and children too, ARE Santa Claus."

"You see, one person, even a magic one, couldn't do it all nowadays anyway, since all these scientists have gotten so smart." He chuckled. "Honestly, some of these fellows make me poor magicians and witches pea-green with envy and wonder."

"Anyway, one person doesn't need to do it, so long as mortals are kind. Whenever a mother sacrifices the memory of her own loved ones to keep someone else's child warm—that's Santa Claus at his best, because it's love."

"When busy men will leave their warm offices and work at busy and successful—I'm there too. And I may be as old as I am is impersonating me." He cast a self-conscious glance at his rotund figure and added, "I may be an un-stylish stout, but I perspire struggle to find just the right thing for some neglected old relative."

The dream was fading. . . His voice grew dim, as he murmured. . . I guess you can't identify me after all, grown-up longer real to you. But take this back with you and pass it along. . . I'll make it a merrier Christmas for everyone who reads it for his own. . . It's MUCH more blessed to give . . . is more precious than the fairest jewels. . . I was awake!

high school journalists from many Iowa schools made corn leis which were presented to the delegates at registration. Prominent speakers on the program were Harrison Forman, photographer for "March on Time," who spoke on "China Photo News Beat," Fred L. Kildow, director of the National Scholastic Press Association; Dr. George Gallup, founder of the Quill and Scroll and now director of the survey feature America Speaks.

The Birmingham delegates spent most of Friday forenoon examining exhibits of All-American and Pacemaker yearbooks and magazines. They report that the most valuable part of their time was that spent in an inspection tour of the Des Moines Register and Tribune plant where the magazine Look is published. In greeting the convention, Fred L. Kildow, director, said, "You are the finest high school body to offer the pick of your student body. This is the universal comment of those who address you at N. S. P. A. sessions and of the teachers who accompany you."

ANOTHER BIG WEEK-END MEAT SALE!

ALL STEAKS 38c lb. PRIME BEEF - WELL AGED Sirloin - Porterhouse T-Bone - Club - Round

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FANCY - SUN DRIED - CALIFORNIA Figs 1-Lb. Bag 25c

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