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T. D. ALMOND

white blanket already spread. Mother Brown set to work preparing the big Christmas dinner for father when he came, but her most tedious task this morning was to bake the huge turkey which lay in the roaster on the kitchen table.

In the meantime Father Brown had finally made his numerous purchases amid the push and shove of the Christmas rush, and was on his way back home.

Now it happened that he, just for a change, had gone a back way to Bentonville this time, it being a little nearer. And as he was jogging along as fast as the old grey nag, which he was driving, could go, he spied a tot of a boy coming up the road that led off to a very small and dilapidated old house, just a few yards from the road.

Seeing the little fellow stop as he neared the mail box by the road, Father Brown drew the reins and stopped old Grey.

"What's your name, sonny?" he asked.

"My name's Toby," answered the young fellow. "My granpa, he's name Toby, too, and my mamma

said for me to come up here to the mail box and ask you to come down to the house a little bit."

Tobias Brown's eyes flashed. Could it be that this was the son of his only girl? Of course he would go, and lifting little Toby into the old carriage, they rumbled off down the road toward the house. As they went, they talked.

"What's your mamma's name, Toby?" asked the old man.

"My mamma's name is Marion," answered the boy, "and I've got a little sister, too. Her name is Susie. Mamma said my grandma was name Susie."

The old man was becoming more convinced than ever that he was going to his own daughter's home. At length they reached the house, and after hitching his horse, he and the boy went in.

The outside could say nothing of the in. For there was barely any furniture and there were great cracks through which the wind blew snow and piled it in little drifts about the floor.

Over in the corner by the fire place sat a weary and worn little wo-

man and at her knee was a very small child crying from hunger and cold.

As Mr. Brown entered the woman arose and came to meet him. His voice trembled as he encircled her in his arms and said,

"My dear Marion, forgive me."

"Dear father, take me home," said that voice so near and dear to his old heart.

Little Toby and Susie were standing by, looking on with amazement, and completely dumbfounded.

After Marion had told her story of how she had gone at her father's bidding, to the city and after finding work she had met a man, Thomas James, by name. He had at once won her affection and she had married him. Time went on, and he suddenly fell sick and died. Since this time, she and the children had been forced to get shelter just wherever they could. There was no food in the house, no wood in the shed, and clothes were few.

Father Brown's heart sank within him; he could resist no longer, and again he encircled his wandering girl to his breast and the two shed

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