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CHRISTMAS PRESENT



By Shirley Sargent

THE SMALL KITTEN called Tupid watched preparations for Christmas dully. Only the middle boy, one Archie Raymond, noticed his apathy. The tree, in all its green splendor, stood tall in the living room bedecked with an increasing number of ornaments.

"Careful," Marcia Raymond admonished her son sharply. "Don't hang those big balls down so low. The kitten will break them."

Gently Archie lifted them to a higher bough, drawing in the pungent scent of the pine. Only he saw that the kitten walked slowly under the tree unaware of the boughs tickling her furry back. His youngest brother had named the roly-poly butterscotch kitten Tupid. Young Billy was easily aroused to fits of anger. His favorite expression, under stress, was a lisped, "You 'tupid, you big 'tupid."

Archie, his ten-year-old brother, Joe, and his parents laughed at the little boy's wrath and, because the kitten was slower than the others in

Three New Tobacco Varieties Released

Millions of dollars eventually may be added to the State's farm income as a result of the release of three new flue-cured tobacco varieties by the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, believes Dr. R. W. Cummings, associate director of the station.

The varieties are Dixie Bright 27, Dixie Bright 101, and Dixie Bright 102, all of which were released last week. The first combines good yields and quality with high resistance to Granville wilt. The other two have combination resistance to black shank and Granville wilt.

"Of course, it's still too early to predict exactly how these varieties will perform on the average farm," Dr. Cummings says. "They have all shown up well in experiments on State test farms. But we know their ultimate value depends on how the growers like them."

To give some idea of their potential value, Dr. Cummings cites the case of Oxford 26, the variety now being used on most soils infested with Granville wilt.

"The U. S. Department of Agriculture estimates that Oxford 26 has added more than a billion dollars to the nation's annual farm income since it was introduced in 1945," he says. Granville wilt had become so bad in the Old Belt that growers were abandoning their farms. Despite weaknesses in yield, Oxford 26 enabled growers to stay in the business and make money. New Dixie Bright 27 should further add to income from wilt-infested soils.

Dixie Bright 101 and 102 are the first varieties to offer resistance to both black shank and Granville wilt. Depending on how farmers like them, they could easily be of as much value to the State as Oxford 26.

Dr. Cummings makes it clear that release of these varieties does not mean an end to the tobacco breeding program. This kind of research is a continuous thing, he says. New diseases will continue to show up as long as tobacco is grown. The varieties just released will some day

One immediate problem is to develop a variety resistant to Granville wilt, black shank, and Fusarium wilt, since some farms in North Carolina now have all three diseases. Another problem not yet solved by plant breeders is that of nematodes, the tiny soil pests that bore into tobacco roots and stunt the plants.

State College Hints To Farm Homemakers

The location of the outlet where the electric iron cord plugs in may seem an unimportant detail to the man who wires the house. But to the woman who does the ironing, a convenient location for this particular outlet saves time and effort and makes for a better ironing job, say the home management specialists.

For efficient work the cord should not drag or catch on the board, hamper the movements of the worker or pull across and thus wrinkle clothes being ironed.

The best place for the outlet is above and to the front of the board, the tests of hand ironing showed. The best height is 36 inches or more above the board. The most convenient position is on a wall faced by the worker; next best, on a wall to the side (right side for right-handed workers); least convenient, on the wall in back. An overhead outlet also makes for convenient ironing if it is within easy reach. But the specialists' caution against using an ordinary light fixture on a drop cord for an iron, this does not give proper heat and is likely to cause overheating of the wire.

In New England, many farmers sell Christmas trees that they clear from pasture land. If the Christmas tree market did not exist, much desirable thinning or pasture clearing might remain undone because of labor costs.



END OF THE RAINBOW... The rainbow of at least one human desire had fulfillment at the end when Judy Sue Warschauer found herself face to face with the doll of her dreams—and it was the very one she wanted for Christmas.



Tupid circled and smelled at the black kitten until he was satisfied. Then his tongue flicked out to lick the kitten.

the litter, they named him, most affectionately, Tupid.

"Archie," Mrs. Raymond was flurried from all the excitement. "That blue globe is much too low. Tupid will get it. I don't doubt," she added pessimistically, "that we will lose half of our globes."

Archie could see that Tupid had no interest either in the swaying boughs or the brilliant-colored fragile balls. For two days Tupid had wandered carelessly about the house and yard. He wasn't playful or friendly and he had stopped purring. Only Archie sensed that the kitten was lonesome for his sisters and brothers and his mother. At first there had been four balls of fur and a proud old alley cat mother. As they grew, they had become playful, pattering swiftly through the house. But now they were all gone, including the mother. Just Tupid was left to keep. Even the black imp with shoe-button eyes had been given away. Tar Baby, who had been the boss of the litter, had been gone barely two days, and Tupid missed him.

"Well," his father's voice boomed again, as he climbed down the ladder. "All done in time for Christmas Eve. Come here, Joe, Archie, you too Billy. I want you to see this fine tree."

Mrs. Raymond switched the lights off and Archie shivered in delighted excitement as the tree blazed, illumined by the strings of lights and balls. The magic moment was shattered by the sharp ring of the doorbell.

A rush of cold air came in as Mr. Raymond flung open the door wide to admit a bundled figure. "My father says I can't keep the kitten," Gerald Parks recited automatically, close to tears. "I have to give it back because it gives my father hay fever." Gerald went out in another rush of frosty air, but not before Mrs. Raymond had pressed a fat candy cane into his mittened hand.

Tar Baby huddled in the middle of the floor. "Watch it, boys," Mr. Raymond warned. "Let's just watch him. He feels strange here now; he'll be all right in a while."

Archie saw Tupid jump from the sofa with a purr of delight. Tupid circled and smelled at the black kitten until he was satisfied. Then his tongue flicked out to lick the kitten. Tupid's paws caressed him as his tongue washed him. The black kitten stood passive, as Tupid showered his pent-up love on him.

"That, mommy," Billy lisped, "Tupid's kissing him, isn't he?" "Um," Mrs. Raymond agreed, "Tar Baby's Tupid's Christmas present."

Mr. Raymond's eyes swept his sons' awe-struck faces. "No," he said firmly. "He's our Christmas present too."

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