

## CHRISTMAS ON THE MOOR

The mercury was fastly falling while over the bleak and barren Moor a wild and fearful storm was raging, bringing suffering to the few poor people who lived there. The whirling, descending, and drifting snow piled high above the fences and hedges. Inside the huts people hovered about the fireplace to keep from freezing. In wonder they shook their heads at the fury of the storm. Near the chimney sat a mother, knitting, while the father read a paper. Their young son was standing near a table storing away into boxes gifts that were to be given to their friends and loved ones Christmas day. Suddenly the mother stopped her knitting, "I heard a cry, just as though someone near was calling for help."

The father, listening at the open door, murmured, "It is a fearful storm! I hear no one, and besides, no one could ever face this snow." He quickly closed the door to keep the ice cold wind from rushing past him.

The son immediately said to his objecting parents, "Someone called us; I will go."

Still protesting, his father said, "Surely, we must be mistaken. Do not risk your life; we lost your older brother--stay, you are our only one."

"Father," said the boy, "isn't it much better that I lose my life than to know that in this fiercely drifting snow we let some poor friend suffer and die. Although my brother out upon the raging sea may have perished, it is our duty now to save one. God has power to care for us."

Heeding not his father's warning, he sprang out into the darkness. He called and called, but above the storm his own voice was all he heard. Then half hidden beneath the snow he discovered a still, unconscious form. Lifting the half-frozen victim, he shouted through the falling snow. "Father! Come! It is my brother! It is Frank, who we thought was dead. I came

out to find another and have found our own instead.

## ONLY A MIRACLE

As young Billy Cummings walked along the street toward his home on the East Side of New York, he realized it was only two days before Christmas. With downcast eyes and a troubled look on his face he was thinking of his Mom back in their flat. He knew that when Christmas morning came there would be no more than usual in their flat. Unless some miracle happened and happened quickly, there would be no Christmas dinner, no Christmas presents, not even the Christmas spirit in the air.

Suddenly Billy stopped and looked down at his feet. Lying there on the pavement was a billfold, old-looking and worn. His mind immediately filled with ideas of what he could buy for Mom with the money in the billfold. But how did he know there was any money in the pocketbook?

To find its contents was one way only, so Billy picked it up and opened it. Inside he found more money than he had ever seen before. Altogether there was nearly one hundred dollars in the wallet; Billy looked at the money longingly but realized it was wrong for him to take it. His mother would never let him keep it. Deciding to carry it to the local police station, he started out. On arriving there, he found a stranger talking to the desk sergeant.

"Yes, I lost the wallet over on Seventy-third street."

When Billy heard this, he handed the wallet to the policeman. The stranger's face beamed with pleasure at seeing his lost purse.

On Christmas morning Billy was surprised to find outside his door a basket full of food, fruit, nuts, and candy. Written on the basket were these words: "From your better self."