He seized his pack, and full of joy piled me upon it like a toy, and rush-ing forth into the night began his

world-embracing flight. He used a sleigh, as we all know, but needed neither ice or snow. We sailed away o'er mount and plain, through many

there we quickly went.

some men by others well esteemed got prison wear the while they dreamed; and others, poor and fur-nished ill, of good things must have

nished ill, of good things must have found their fill; and many men of lean estate awoke to find their riches great, each one admonished that his door should always open to the poor. Fantastic tricks, too, Santa played on men and women, boy and maid. In one old spinster's stocking thin I saw him slip a manikin; in one old bach's dingy place a woman's form of wondrous grace. "Twas wax, of course; but 'twas a hint that ought to stir a heart of fint. A man with millions strangely made Old Santa left a hoe and spade; to one I knew ill-hap had struck he left a parcel labeled.

struck he left a parcel labeled "Luck;" to pals of mine that Fortune bars he gave next season's motor cars. This got my goat, and I to

see just what he purposed giving me quite foolishly the silence broke, and empty-handed I awoke!—Judge.

CHRISTMAS SUPERSTITIONS

If you will go to the crossroads be-

If on Christmas eve you make a little heap of salt on the table, and it

ristmas morning you can see spir

If you burn elder on Christmas eve you will have revealed to you all the witches and the sorcerers of the

If you eat a raw egg on Christma morning, fasting, you can carry heavy weights.

A Husky Fowl.

Willie came in from the shed where
Uncle Rufus was picking a Christman
chicken for his small city nephew's

"Aunt Sue!" he cried as he entered,
"what do you think? Uncle Rufus is
out in the shed husking a hen!"

Hard Times Sure

Brown—You musta't feel disappointed this Christmas, Johnnie. These are terrible times we're having.

'Little Johnnie—They must be pretty hard, 'dad, when Santa Claus takes

the trouble to drag my old cart out of the lumber-room and give it a

Cause for Sorrow.

Photographer (taking family group)

-Now, then, Mr. Housefull, the exressions are all right but yours. Try
o look happy; remember that Christ-

tween eleven and twelve on Christma

night you will hear what most con cerns you in the coming year.

TELLING SANTA CLAUS HIS WANTS



By J. A. WALDRON.

DREAMED a dream on Christmas eve that no one, surely, will believe. All will discredit it because in It I was with Santa Claus and witnessed many things so queer I hesitate to tell them was with Santa Claus and witnessed many things so queer I hesitate to tell them and made it ready for his back. It holds a million things or more from Santa's rare and endless store, and like some basket magical, though taken from 'tis always tull.

Though I saw Santa plainly, he seemed not at all to notice me. He seat in silence with a map spread out upon his ample lap to mark his course o'er land and sea while waiting for his evening tea.

His cook—he has no wife, you know and rain—through weathers, snow and rain—through wind and sleet and zero air—though all the time it seemed quite fair.

A dozen reindeer ran ahead. Their bells were soundless as they fied, and all the ghostiy journey seemed quite all the ghostiy journey seemed quite and continent would loom and melt into an occur ere I felt a moment pass, and yet between a million Christmas homes were seen and gifts uncounted lei were bestowed from Santa's rich and boundless load.

Though I upon the top reposed I was in no way discomposed, for magte wonders multinited.

boundless load.

Though I upon the top reposed I was in no way discomposed, for magic wonders multiplied that night upon our snowy ride. The greater wonders, though, to me might have been traced to Santa's tea, sophisticated by his cook, and of which he so much partook; for at the homes of wealth, where boys and girls had much, he left few toys, while poorer came in and said she meant to go.
She said her job did not quite suit and he must find a substitute. Cooks everywhere just grump and gad, and

Well, Santa's smile quick left his he left few toys, while poorer face and he ripped up a dress of lace children's wishes found complete fulperhaps intended for this cook, who fillment on his round; and to strange gave him then a wrathful look; and -humors he gave vent as here and



when she put the teapot down I saw her slip from out her gown and drop into the teapot quick some sort of dope with movement slick.

Twould take much more than this, I think, to drive old Santa Claus to drink; that is to say, to rum, per-haps, though sometimes he may like his schnapps. Full many a cup of tea he quaffed. The more he drank the

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OFFICE OVER HADLET'S STORE teave Messages at Alamance Pharmacy 'Phone 97. Residence 'Phone Williams' 2-4 p. m. and by Apparament Hang it, man, that's just what I am The Million Dollar Mystery

By HAROLD MAC GRATH

Illustrated from Scenes in the Photo Drama of the Same Name by the Thanhouser Film Company

(Copyright, 1914, by Harold MacGrath) only clever thing I did was to keep

ward her.
"I had her in my arms."

not be seen in public any more. This

her aside, curse her, and leave her. In

one thing she fooled us all. I never

"Hargreave was madly in love with

her. He cursed her, but he came back

police and entombed in the fortress, I

and fear. He came to a halt abruptly

I'll leave the daughter to your tender

ers of attorney to act for Hargreave

while absent, up to the day the girl

From now on, day and night, there will be a cat at the knothole, and 'ware

mouse! Could you make up anything like this girl?" suddenly.

"Do it. Go to the ship which picked

up the man at sea and quiz the cap-tain. Either the aviator or Hargreave

is alive. It is important to learn which

salient features. Now, by-by!

But Norton reached the captain first

"I'll keep an eye on our friend Jones.

"Don't worry. You have no rival.

"The butler," she said, "has full pow

and looked down at her.

becomes of legal age."

"A fair likeness."

knew of the child till you told me."

He paused to light a cigarette.

CHAPTER III.

The Safe in the Lenely Warehouse.
The princess did not remain long after the departure of the police with the bogus detectives. It had been a very difficult corner to wriggle out of, all because Braine had added to his plans after she had left the apart. all because Braine had added to his plans after she had left the apartment. But for the advent of the meddling reporter the coup would have succeeded, herself apparently perfectly innocent of complicity. That must be the keynote of all her plans: to appear quite ignocent and leave no trail behind her. She had gained the confidence of Florence and her companion. And she was rather certain that she had impressed this lazy-eyed reporter and the stolid butler. She had told nothing but the truth regarding her relationship. They would find that out She was Feters Particular. out. She was Katrina Pushkin's cousin. But blood with her counted as naught. She had room in her heart but for two things, Braine and money to spend on

things, Braine and money to spend on her caprices.

How long has your highness known mr. Braine?" asked the reporter idly, repose. "Your very frankness regard-Mr. Braine?" asked the reporter idly, as he smoothed away all signs of his wool over their eyes. Of course

"O, the better part of a year. Mr. Hargreave did not recognize me the other night. That was quite excusable, for when he last saw me I was not more than twelve. My child," she said to Florence, "build no hopes regarding your mother. She is doubt-less dead. Upon some trivial matter I do not know what it was—she was confined to the fortress. That was seventeen years ago. When you enter the fortress at St. Petersburg, you cease to ha"

seventeen years ago. When you enter the fortress at St. Petersburg, you cease to be."
"That is true enough."
"I did not recall myself to your fatter. I did not care at that moment, to shock him with the remembrance of the past. Is not Mr. Braine a remarkable man?" All this in her charming broken English. ing broken English.

"He is, indeed," affirmed Norton.

"He's a superb linguist, knows every-body and has traveled everywhere. No matter what subject you bring up he seems well informed." "Come often," urged Florence.

"Come often," urged Florence.
"I shall, my child. And any time you need me, call for me. After all, I am nearly your aunt. You will find life in the city far different from that

life in the city far different from that which you have been accustomed to."

She limped down to her limousine. In tripping up Norton he had stepped upon her foot heavily.

"She is lovely!" cried Florence.

"Well, I must be on my way, also," said Norton. "I am a worldly-wise man, Miss Florence. So is Jones here.

Never, co any place without letting Never go any place without letting him know; not even to the corner drug store. I am going to find your father. Some one was rescued. I'm going to find out whether it was the

aviator or Mr. Hargreave." Jones drew in a deep breath and his eyes closed for a moment. At the door he spoke to the reporter.

"What do you think of that wom-

"I believe that she told the truth."
She is charming."

"She is. But for all her charm and truth I cannot help distrusting her. I have an idea. I shall call up your of-fice at the end of each day. If a day

comes without a call, you will know that something is wrong."

"A very good idea." Norton shook hands with everyone and departed.

"A tery good are the company of the comp "What a brave, pleasant young

melts over night, you will die the next year; if, in the morning, it re-mains undiminished, you will live. nan!" murmured Susan. "I like him, too; and I'd like him for a friend," said the guileless girl. "It is very good to have a friend If a shirt be spun, woven and sewed by a pure, chaste maiden on Christmas day it will be proof against lead or steel. like Mr. Norton," added Jones; and passed out into the kitchen. All the help had been discharged and upon his shoulders lay the burden of the booking till such time when he could

There was a stormy scene between Braine and the princess that night. "Are you in your dotage?" she asked

"There, there; bring your voice down a bit. Where's the girl?" "In her home. Where did you sup-pose she would be, after that botchwork of letting me go to do one thing while you had in mind another? And in ordinary pair of cutthroats, at

It is unfortunate to carry anything forth from the house on Christmas morning until something has been brought into it. "The thought came to me after you If the fire burns brightly on Christ-mas morning it betokens prosperity; if it smolders, adversity.

It would have been all right if you

had consulted a clairvoyant."

"What the deuce do you mean by
that?" Braine demanded roughly.

"I mean that then you would have learned your friend the reporter was to arrive upon the scene at its most vital moment." ital moment."
"What, Norton?"
"Yes. The trouble is with you, you

"What, Norton?"

"Yes. The trouble is with you, you have been so successful all these years that you have grown overconfident. I tell you that there is a desperately shrewd man somewhere back of all this. Mark me, I do not believe Hargreave is dead. He is in hiding. It may be near by. He may have dropped from the balloon before it left land. The man they picked up may be Orts, the aeronaut The five thousand might have been his fee for rescuing Hargreave. Here is the greatest thing we've sver been up against; and you start in with every day methods!"

"Ittle woman, don't let your tongue run away with you too far."

"Tm not the least bit afraid of you, Leo. You need me, and it has never been more apparent than at this moment."

"All right. I fell by the wayside this trip. Truthfully, I realized it five minutes after the men were gone. The

chess player and a wonderful amateur chess player and a wonderful amateur billiardist. Perhaps Jones, the taciturn and inscrutable, had not told him all he knew regarding his master's past. Well, well; he had in his time un-tangled worse snarls. The office had turned him loose, a free lance, to handle the case as he saw fit, to turn in the story when it was complete. in the story when it was complete.

But what a story it was going to be when he cleared it up! The more mys-tifying it was, the greater the zest and sport for him. Norton was like a



"I Am Not Afraid of You, Leo." gambler who played for big stakes, and only big stakes stirred his crav-

Orient told him the same tale he had told the other reporters; he had picked up a man at sea. The man had been brought aboard totally exhausted. "Was there another body any where?"

"I sent a wireless and that seemed to bother him. It looked so that he did not want anybody to learn that he had been rescued. The moment the boat touched the pier he lost himself in the crowd. Fifty reporters came aboard, but he was gone. And I could but tell them just what I'm telling you." "He had money." to the house to forgive her, to find that she had been seized by the secret

"About five thousand." "Please describe him."

had my revenge. It was I who sent in the information, practically lagus. But in Russia they never question; they act and forget. So he had a daughescription he had given to all the reporters. Norton looked over the rail He began pacing the floor, his hands at the big warehouse. behind his back; and the woman watched him, oscillating between love "Was it an ordinary balloon?"
"There you've got me. My Marconi

man says the balloon part was like any other balloon; but the passenger car was a new business to him. It could be driven against the wind." "Driven against the wind. Did you

tell this to the other chaps?" "Don't think I did. Just remem-bered it. Probably some new invention; and now it's at the bottom of the sea. Two men, as I understand it, went off in this contraption. One is

gone for good,"

"For good," echoed the reporter gravely. Gone for good, indeed, poor devil! Norton took out a roll of bills. "There's two hundred in this roll."

"Well?" said the captain, vastly as-

"It's yours if you will do me a mail favor."
"If it doesn't get me mixed up with morrow morning, early. Tears of and tramp; and some of the barbor police have taken a dislike to me. What do

guish, and all that. Sallors are easy when a woman weeps. No color, re-member; just the yellow wig and the you want me to do?"

"The police will not bother you. This man Hargreave had some enemies; they want either his life or his money; "Aren't you going to kiss me, Leo?"
He caught her hands. "There is a species of Delilah about you, Olga. A maybe both. It is a peculiar case, with Russia in the background. He might kiss tonight from your lips would snip my locks; and I need a clear head. Whether we fail or win, when this game is played you shall be my wife." He kissed the hands an strode out into the hall. have laid the whole business before the police, but he chose to fight it out himself. And to tell the truth, I don't believe the police would have done

"Heave her over; what do you want me to do for that handsome roll of nto the hall.

The woman gazed down at her small white hands and smiled tenderly. (The money?"

tigress has her tender moments!) He "If any man or woman who is not reporter comes to pump you tell them the man went ashore with a packet un-She went into her dressing room and for an hour or more worked over her face and hair, till she was certain that ler his arm."

"Tie a knot in that."
"Say that the man was gray haired, clean shaven, straight, with a scar if the captain of the ship described her to anyone else he could not fail to give a fair description of Florence Harhigh up on his forehead, generally cov red up by his hair."
"That's battened down, my lad. Ge

Other reporters had besieged him, but they had succeeded in gathering the vaguest kind of information. They had "Say that you saw him enter yonde vaguest kind of information. They had no description of Hargreave, while Norton had. Before going down to the boat, however, he had delved into the past of the Princess Oiga Perigoff. It cost him a pocketful of money, but the end justified the means. The princess had no past worth mentioning. By plecing this and that together he became assured that she had told the simple truth regarding the relationship to Fforence's mother. A cablegram had given him all the facts in her history; there were no gaps or discrepand. Whrehouse, and later depart without his packet.

"Easy as dropping my mudhook."
"That's all." No:ton gave the cap-tain the money. "Good-by and many "Don't mention it." Norton left the slip and proceeded to the office of the warehouse. He ap-proached the manager's desk.

"Hello, Grannis, old top!"
The man looked up from his work arilly. Then his face brightened.
"Norton? What's brought you here? O, yes; that balloon busin

"What kind of a man is the captal of that old hooker in the slip?" "Shifty in gun running, but other wise as square as a die. Looks funny to see an oid tub like that fixed up with wireless; but that has saved his neck a dozen times when he was run-ning it into a noose. Not going to in-

terview me, are you?"
"No. I'm going to ask you to do me
a little favor." "They always say that. But spin er out. If it doesn't cost me my job,

"Well, there will be a person making inquiries about the mysterious (Continued on 4th page.)

The Gift That Tipped the Scales

By LILLIAN DUCEY

2222222222222222

S long as Caljsta's mone held out she went gayly about her Christmas shop-ping. When she found ping. When she is that her tiny purse empty, she stopped buy ing-wherein she showed greater wisdom than many grown-ups—and with a soul replete with satisfaction she left the store. "I've got pretty much most everything, I guess," she said to herself, hug-

she tripped along the coun try streets. "But I'll know for sure when I get home." And when she reached home the very first thing she did was to array the gorgeous gifts upon the white spread of her littie bed. Christian two days away. Therefore it was imperative that she begin that very moment to put them in order. Then like an em-

ging her bundles close as

bodied cyclone she burst into her elder sister's room, intent upon tissue paper and seals and all the other necessities for making beautiful Christmas bundles.

What Calista saw there made her freeze in her tracks, as if the high wind of Destiny, which had borne her thus far, had suddenly become a dead calm. Margaret, her beautiful, lovely Margaret was standing with tightened lips that twitched and quivered. In her hand, which hastly dropped to her side, but not before Calista had seen, was clutched a photograph. And the whispered words on her lips repeated themselves over and over in Calista's mind, while amazement held her dumb. "It grows worse, the ache What Calista saw there made her freeze in her tracks, as if the high wind of Destiny, which had borne her her dumb. "It grows worse, the ache
—worse as the days go by." Not until
Calista had interpreted the meaning one but Jasper she might confide in

the quivering lips of the elder girl. She was indeed Gortunate, she thought, that it was only Calista who had discovered her momentary aberration. For that was what it was. How could it be anything else? What girl with ny pride would allow barself to-no, she hadn't cried! The man did not live who could make her weep for him.

"You'll return what you don't need,

Calista dear?" she said, sweetly, "Yes," answered Calista briefly, and

went.

And then, just to prove to herself that she had regained her sanity., Margaret Wesley looked again at that picture in her hand-looked, and felt a quick contraction of the throat, a sud-den piercing sting upon her eyebalis. And down upon the picture dropped a

Calista, on the other side of the door,

Calista, on the other must was saying to herself:
"She was going to cry. Her eyes were teary. It was Jasper's picture the firm of the control she was trying to hide." And then, childlike, in spite of her surprise the gathering forces of her sympathy were completely overwhelmed to the de-mands of Christmas. And why not? After all, Calista's mind was too youth. ful to be deeply concerned about lover's quarrels and broken engagements and such things. And she had made such marvelous purchases. Indeed as they lay spread out on the

bed it did seem as if only a genius or a little girl could have reached such a little girl could have reached such decisions. There was a really lovely box of handkerchiefs, embellished with the pinkest of pink paper, for mother. That gift had put a tremendous hole in her pocketbook. And a pair of suspenders for daddy. These two presents were the first purchased, and while Calista still held the leash in her facey. Afterward let the sad in her fancy. Afterward, let the sad truth be revealed at once (but then Calista was such a little girl, how could she be expected to prove bigger minded and stronger than grownups?). she succumbed to this intoxication of glittering, gleaming, glowing displayed

wares.
"For brother Jim—that nice green tie," Calista hummed softly to herse
—a tune improvised for the occasion "For sister Nell-that story book. "For sister Nell—that story book hope she reads it all to me. And baby boy can have that rattle. Uncle Fred that nice glass pitcher."
paused and added sotto voce: "I got it in the beautiful Ten Cent store. And he's going to be married, so he can use it." Then the song went on— "And Auntie Madge that box of

soap." That was from the Ten Cent store also, but then each cake was done up in shiny red paper, and there were three cakes in a box. "And sis-ter Kate a string of beads. "Once more the song reverted to everyday speech:
"Maybe she'll lend them to me once
in a while 'cause I gave them to her."
"And sister Margaret—" Calista
paused aghast. The one thing that

nad not been apportioned was a tiny set of dishes—also from that beautiful Ten Cent store. She looked over the gifts. Some were already wrapped for all the while she sang her nimble fingers had been busy. But her gen-ius solved the problem. "Well," she said reflectively, "she

well," she said reflectively, "she can use them for an ornament on her desk maybe, and I'll promise to dust them for her. I like little dishes."

But having cleared that hurdle another presented itself almost immediately. On a flooding onset of memory Calista remembered that she had fully intended when she started out to

A Nautical Christmas Tale



Its deck was white as snow.

It bore no tow'ring masts above, No anchor chains below.

Its small, spring-bottomed mattree Was laden high with wealth,

En voyage - hist! - by stealth.

get something for Jasper—the prouer that was to have been, but now wasn't to be, as she explained it to her mind-for in Calista's loyal little heart burned a steady flame of liking for

Calista had interpreted the meaning of those words did she find her voice; then she said blandly:

"I came for— I'm wrapping up my wanted lying on Margaret's desk, she wanted lying on Margaret's desk, she went for them.

Meanwhile, a brave control touched the quiving lips of the elder sirl. She mental review of her most cherished her blue eyes. "Unleas—unless I give him something of my own." But a mental review of her most cherished possessions failed to reveal anything suitable for a big grown-up man. Then even as she gave up the problem her despairing musing awoke to life with a delighted, "Oh!" As she pondered she had been gazing directly at the framed picture of Margaret which stood on her little dresser.

Calista was nothing if not master-ful in the manner in which she reached ultimate decisions—and then lived up to them. Less than a minute after she had allotted Jasper that forget-me-not framed face she was also promising him a note. For Calista really had a fellow feeling of inderstanding for the man-especially about that picture.

"Dear brother Jasper, that was to have been," her letter ran. "I am sending you for a Christmas present the picture of Margaret which you returned when you sent back the other presents she gave you. I know you will like to have it again. I know how you feel. Just most like the day I threw the peanuts at Kitty Marshai's head when she put them in my lap and I was mad at her. Only being a big man and not a little girl you can't do 'xactly what I did. Of course And he I was mad—but I did want the pea-nuts. So after she was gone and no-body was looking I picked them up again. Nobody'll know you got the picture, 'cause I won't tell. Anyway Margaret's got one of yours she didn't send back. I guess 'cause she ain't such a maddy cat as we. It's our red

"Your faithful and loving,

"CALISTA."
"P. S. A merry Christmas. If you want to send me a present send it to Margaret instead. Without being unthe days."

The gift and the letter were done up

and duly delivered the next morning Amid the stress of holding prepara-tions Calista did not experience the necessity of being secretive. She walked up to the Hemingway's door, a

waiked up to the Hemingway's door, a little girl bursting with the season's joy, and said to Jacper's mother: "It's—it's my Christmas present to Jasper! No reason—is there?—why I shouldn't give my dear Jasper, one?" And with a shy little laugh she scam-pered off.

And with a shy little laugh she scampered off.

And then the wheels of Fate spun round and round, having been given a very vigorous start by Calista.

Christmas morning dawned clear and white-bound. The drifting cloud banks had left the heavens during the night and settled with feathery lightness on the earth, had made Calista's world a beautiful amphitheater, snowmuffied to an echo, wherein sleigh bells tinkled merrily and joyous voices rang gladsomely. It was an ideal Christmas Day. And perfect it proved to Calista.

Calista was steeped in bliss. But not any more so than if she had received but two or three of the many, many gifts heaped upon her by adoring relatives. And it was not until afternoon that her mase of joy began to take on coherency, and she began to link in her mind the gifts to their denors. Then it was that she removed.

to link in her mind the gifts to their donors. Then, it was that she remembered her sister's former betrothed. "Did you receive anything from Jasper, Margaret?" she blurted out. For tunately they were alone, the rest of the family having gone to Aunt Madge's house for a little visit. "But since Calista had a cold, Margaret

The skipper of this freighted c The cargo he did not espy,

Till he hove into port And then upon the portaid In raptures he did kneel. For Santa Claus is no mere

Margaret, who had been staring with dream-haunted eyes into vacancy.



had touched her. But the next mo-ment, as if remembering that this searing must be endured, she answered sweetly:

"That's funny." Calista had noted the start and now was taking shy stock of her. "I didn't either. And I thought he'd give one of us a Christ-

Margaret added nothing to prolong this conversation, and apparently Calista was too intent upon going her own way in thought to continue it perforce, for silence fell between

And it was into this silence that

And before Margaret could utter a word of protest she had the receiver. Then assuming an important air of grown-upness she attended to the af-Then assuming an important air of grown-upness she attended to the affair in hand.

"Hello! Yes, this is 4237 J. Yes, this is Calista. Oh! Did you like it? Did you? I—yes, I thought you would!—"

For a moment the slipped her very proper telephone manner and became the eager little girl. The next she was back again doubly dignified of tone.

"I suppose you didn't give any Christmas presents this year. Mar-garet says you didn't give her any—I asked her—and you didn't send me

anything—"
"Calista!" It was Margaret's voice, "Calista!" It was Margaret's voice, quivering, questioning. "Who!"
Calista was intent on the phone. "Yes," she was saying, 'you saw them going to Auntie Madge's Yes, all but Margaret and me. Yes, of course she'll talk to you—when I get through. Now! You can't wait to hear her voice! I must say Jasper Hemingway that you're very rude and impolite. I wanted to tell you about all the Christmas presents I got. Yes, I will be mad. I am. But I'll tell her."
Meanwhile a white face waited at

I'll tell her."

Meanwhile a white face waited at Calista's side. From it great tearwashed eyes stared incredulously.

"Here—" Calista was oblivious to the insistent tide of human emotion surging about her, as she held the receiver toward Margaret. "He says to tell you he was in the wrong and he's ready to go down on his knees to sak you to forgive him. And he says to emphasize the 'down on your knees."

says to emphasize the 'down on your knees.'"

Margaret put out a hand. It was a wild yearning gesture with which she bent to hear that voice. And Calistagoing into the next room, noted the sudden light that flew to her face. Incredibly transformed she was from the dream-haunted girl of a few moments ago. And without really understanding how she, a little girl, had made a hot-tempered man ashamed of himself, Calista yet knew that she had tipped the scales of chance.

"I did it," she whispered to herself. "My Christmas present made him glad again."

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