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## Someone At Christmas

By CARLE FREEMAN

THE little gift shop was crowded when Nancy entered it, but almost immediately she noticed Larry Bryant. She sensed the usual disturbance At sight of him, and recalling the trend of her thoughts for the past several minutes brought a flush of warmth to her cheeks. She'd been thinking, somewhat resentfully, as she went along the busy streets of the little town, how unfair it was that Christmas had come before she could get acquainted with someone in Davenshire-Larry Bryant, for instance, departmental head at the electric plant where she worked. Christmas wasn't Christmas unless it could be shared with

And now Larry was standing at he dish counter deciding about a pair of title green rabbit salt and pepper shakers. It didn't matter particularly that he'd buy the shakers-aside from the significance of such an act-but she'd had her own heart set on them more or less for a week. Larry had been in the shop every afternoon hat she'd been there, but this was his first time at the dish counter. The little shakers were as good as

The other day when she'd looked at them, the sales girl had said. registrations totaling 616. Better buy them. These are the last ones, and they are a bargain way from Sweden."

travagance and look out of place partment of Agriculture. on the little table in her corner kitchenette at Lil Ranson's old rooming house. Then there'd be no one to admire them-only herself.

"They might be gone the next ime you come," the girl had said when Nancy left the counter.

But they'd been there the next ime Nancy went back to the little gift shop. Every afternoon for a week they'd been there, as if awaiting for her to make up her mind to buy them.

Nancy held her breath as she wåtched Larry from a distance. For now she knew that if he didn't take the shakers, she'd buy them

But even as Nancy watched, she aw him hand the shakers to a

She tried to push her disappointment aside and select an inexpensive little gift for one of her co-workers at the plant. Tomorrow was Christmas Eve, and the employees and officials of the plant had drawn names as part of a gift-giving program they'd planned to have about the huge, gayly decorated tree in the arched entrance.

Nancy dreaded the occasion, more so now than before. She regretted the day she'd left her home own to take a better job at Davenhire. Why hadn't she waited until after Christmas to make the change!

When the time came the next!

Fontana Registrations Reported By T. V. A.

FONTANA DAM - Registration of visitors to Fontana Dam totaled 490,122 for the first nine months of 1948, the Tennessee Valley Authority has reported.

States having the highest registration included: North Carolina, 147,073; Tennessee, 138,817; Georgia, 27,071; Florida, 18,256; South Carolina. 21,465; Alabama, 15,-

Also Ohio, 15,169; Illinois, 13,-087; Kentucky, 13,050; Virginia, 10.872; Michigan, 9,033; New York, 9,901; Indiana, 7,020.

Forty-four foreign countries had

An electric roaster is a useful at eight dollars. They came all the supplement to the kitchen range rather than a substitute for it. "I know-" Nncy had said, but That's the opinion of home equipthe had thought they'd be an ex- ment specialists for the U.S. De-

> day for the program, Nancy took the gift that was handed to her and slipped from the crowd. She wouldn't be missed, she thought bitterly, as she hurried from the building. Snow fell softly about her in a gentle burst from the dark sky, and the ring of voices from the plant followed her in a kind of haunting, sad beauty.

> Inside her apartment she looked down at the gayly wrapped package in her hands through a blur of tears. It was the only Christmas gift she'd received, and it had been given only because someone had drawn her name.

She unwrapped the package, and suddenly the blur cleared to reveal the little green rabbit salt and pepper shakers with the long, saucy ears—one up and one limping down provocatively.

Her heart thrummed in her throat. Larry had drawn her name. But the cost of the gifts they were to exchange was not to go over twenty-five cents!

Lil Ransom called up the stairs. 'You're wanted on the phone, and tis a man."

Nancy placed the little shakers carefully on the table and turned to the door. The hum of "Silent Night" came from Lil Ransom's radio up the sweep of stairs, and Nancy found herself singing the words softly as she dashed down them, for she knew even before she heard his voice who was waiting for her on the telephone.

The Christmas Merriment, laughter, the shrill sound of children's voices, Christmas carols -we could name a hundred joys of the Yuletide Season - May they All be yoursl

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